GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:600
ANSWERED ON:08.07.2009
DECLARATION OF SWINE FLU AS PANDEMIC
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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria for declaring a disease as an epidemic or a pandemic;

(b) whether the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared Swine Flu as pandemic;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(d) the details of logistical and financial assistance given by WHO;

(e) whether most of the cases of Swine Flu are coming from the developed countries;

(f) if so, whether the Government has requested WHO to issue guidelines/ instructions to such countries to check their out bound passengers;

(g) if so, the details thereof;

(h) whether the Government has also issued any advisory note to such developed countries including US; and

(i) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

(a) WHO has laid down criteria for phasing of a global pandemic based on geographic spread and capability of the agent to cause human to human transmission. Details are placed at Annexure-I.

(b) & (c) Yes, Sir. The World Health Organization has raised the level of pandemic alert from level five to level six declaring start of New Influenza Pandemic, 2009 on 11th June, 2009. It implies wide spread human infection of Influenza A H1N1(earlier called Swine Flu) and the disease spreading to at least two regions of WHO.

(d) WHO provides technical assistance to member countries. India has also consulted WHO on technical guidelines. It has supported Government of India with diagnostic primers and seed virus for manufacturing vaccine. It has also supported capacity development for State and Central Rapid Response teams at a cost of about Rs. 3.00 crores.

(e) Yes. The list of origin of 134 travel related laboratory confirmed cases in India is at Annexure-II.

(f) to (i) World Health Organization is not advocating any travel restrictions. However, Government of India has asked our Indian Missions in these countries to take up the issue of exist screening of outbound passengers with the respective Governments.